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ASIA SUNDAY 1990  
CHRIST OUR PEACE  
BUILDING A JUST SOCIETY

The 1990 Asia Sunday service was held on May 27 at Tokyo's Shinanomachi Church, culminating a week of travel by NCC/Japan's General Secretary Maejima Munetoshi and guest speaker C.M. Kao of the Presbyterian Church of Taiwan. The two travelled first to Okinawa, then up to Kyushu and Shikoku before returning to Tokyo. The Tokyo gathering was attended by 200 people.

Speaking on the theme of "Asian Perspectives on Japanese Nationalism," C.M. Kao drew on his experience in Taiwan under Japanese colonial rule. The address was delivered in Japanese. The following is a summary of Rev. Kao's talk.

After visiting the World War II battlegrounds in Okinawa and learning the truth about those who were killed in the war between the US and Japan, I reflected on the ugliness of the war, a war initiated and led by order of the Emperor, who was placed in the role of a "god" in the military state.

From 1895 to 1945 Japan colonized Taiwan, beginning an endless stream of tragedies on the island. We, Taiwanese, were looked down upon and treated as second class citizens. Our land, schools and church buildings - all were taken by the Japanese. Then, at the end of the war they were taken again by the Chinese when they began their occupation of Taiwan. Once again we had to buy our own land back from the Chinese rulers.

We were taught that we should die for

Japan's Emperor; loyalty and nationalistic patriotism was a backbone of our education. Freedom of belief was taken away and Emperor worship was enforced. The military checked each home to make sure that the imperial shrine was displayed according to orders. Those who made the decision to seek truth and pursued their religious freedom were martyred. The mountain people who opposed the oppressive state rule were killed along with their families.

I pray for Japan not only to be beautiful in its mountains and fields but also to be beautiful in its mind and heart.

The biblical message is taken from Micah 6:8 "...but what does the Lord require of you, but to do justice, love kindness and to walk humbly with your God."

It is thus necessary for us to re-evaluate history instead of hiding Japan's past mistakes. The Japanese are the oppressors as well as the victims of the war. It is necessary for Japan to confess its sins and use the confession process as one would use a rear view mirror - checking behind before taking steps forward. We should learn to walk humbly with God.

The Emperor and his family should not be absolutized and placed in a position of idolatry. Nor should those in influential positions make use of the authority of the imperial family to oppress others. We should identify God's will in the individuals who are created according to God's plan. We must do justice in this patriarchal society and love kindness through sharing the sufferings of others.

God has given us enough food to feed all the people on the earth, but the earth is filled with injustice and love is completely absent. We must extend our love to others and then 'flowers of faith,



love, and hope' may blossom.

#### LETTER OF APPRECIATION

Dear friends in Japan,

I deeply appreciate your invitation to participate in the Asia Sunday program. Visiting Okinawa, Oita, Hyuga, Miyazaki, Kagoshima, Matsuyama and Tokyo, we shared many concerns and sufferings in Asia and prayed for God's caring in troubled lands.

I learned many things during this trip and appreciate the beautiful memories from the kindness I received upon each visit. Although it is appropriate to send my appreciation directly to all those I met, I'd like to send appreciation to you in this letter.

I continue to pray that Japan and other parts of Asia and the world will be more beautiful and that a just community will be built through faith, love, prayers and action. May God's blessings be with you.

(Rev.) C.M. Kao

#### SELF DEFENSE FORCES AIRLIFTS ENTHRONEMENT SEAT

A ceremonial structure on which the Emperor will declare his ascension to the throne in the "Sokui no Rei" or enthronement ceremony was secretly airlifted by the Self Defense Force (SDF) from the Imperial Palace in Kyoto to Tokyo on Tuesday May 29, 1990. The airlift was kept secret in an effort to avoid attacks by those in opposition to the Emperor system.

The enthronement seat, called "Takamikura" (The High Seat) will be a primary feature of the Emperor's enthronement rites to be held on November 12, of this year. The structure, weighing 8 tons, was airlifted from Kyoto by the Air SDF. It was scheduled to be transferred from the Ground SDF Tachikawa Camp in the suburbs of Tokyo to the Imperial Palace in Tokyo the following day.

The seat was made for the enthronement Emperor Taisho (1912-1926) and was used for the inauguration of his son Emperor Showa (1926-1989).

"Sokui no Rei" is one of the two rites of imperial succession, the second being "Daijosai" or "Great Food Offering." Both rites serve to confirm the emperor's sovereign identity. According to N. Kazuki of the United Church of Christ, Japan's Special Committee on Yask Shrine Issues:

"'Sokui no Rei' is an ancient ceremony proclaiming as new emperor of the land a king who had conquered and subjugated Japanese islands and who had absorbed in himself the pre-existing territorial deities ('kami') of the land - a kind of 'king within a king.' This rite now focuses on the emperor and empress, and the ascension to an awesome, elevated throne. The Japanese government invites representatives of other countries to the ceremony, but does not tell them of its inherent message: ...that all come to bow down before the emperor who is 'king within a king.'"

The ceremonial structure has an octagonal shaped roof. This eight-sided roof symbolizes moving out into all directions and dimensions. The center of the eight corners means the power and authority of the conquerors of the whole world. "The eight corners of the world under one roof.." was the slogan for Japan's military invasions. Since the same ideology is prominent today in Japan's economic exploitation of other Asian countries, it appears that Japan is repeating again its imperialist invasions in the region.

Also airlifted to Tokyo by five SDF helicopters was a slightly smaller structure called "Michodai," in which the Empress will sit during the enthronement rites. It weighs 7 tons.

THIS ANNOUNCES  
AN INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM  
ON ASIAN NATIONALISM  
NOVEMBER 16-21, 1990  
HAKONE, JAPAN  
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**ILLEGAL WORKERS SURRENDER  
TO IMMIGRATION AUTHORITY**

**INFORMATION LACK  
CAUSES PANIC**

Over the past week, from May 28-31, 1,000 to 2,000 illegal workers a day, fearing punishment after the revised Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Law goes into effect on June 1, have lined up outside the Tokyo Immigration Bureau to turn themselves in and face deportation.

Under the revised law any employers of undocumented foreign workers hired on or after June 1, 1990 will face up to three years' imprisonment or a fine of up to 2 billion yen.

It appears that the panic was caused by lack of sufficient information on the revision offered by the Justice Ministry's Immigration Bureau. Since the beginning of April the Immigration Bureau has seen a rush of undocumented workers, mostly from Pakistan, Bangladesh and the Philippines. The rush seems to be in response to rumors that they will face harsher penalties when the revised law is implemented.

Under the revised law, illegal workers basically face the same punishment as under the previous law - deportation without indictment. These fears were reinforced by accounts in English newspapers implying that they will face harsher penalties. Some of the papers have since provided accurate information.

Some employers have also panicked, firing their unskilled foreign workers despite the fact that they do not face punishment under the revised law if their employees entered Japan before June 1.

In spite of the confusion and lack of a clear understanding of the implications of the revised law the Immigration Bureau published no English guide on the revision, thus no effort was made to provide information to those who cannot read Japanese.

According to one of the Japanese English language daily newspapers, an undocumented worker from Bangladesh working in Japan for the past six months said; "I can't understand why the Japanese government wants to get rid of us so much when we are working so hard."

The man has a wife and seven children in Pakistan and came to Japan in order to earn money to support his family. Yet fearing imprisonment he must return to Bangladesh. His airplane ticket cost 130,000 yen (US\$ 867.00) leaving him with no money to give his family.

The NCC/J's ad hoc coalition for Refugee's and Migrant Workers Issues (which includes the Roman Catholic Justice and Peace Commission) has invited a fact-finding team from the WCC to focus on the migrant workers human rights situation in Japan.

The aforementioned coalition has decided to set up a research project on both the migrant workers and refugee situation. As part of the process of implementing this project the coalition hopes that the WCC's fact finding team can gather enough information on the migrant workers' and refugee situation so that they can make an appropriate proposal and appeal at the UN Human Rights Commission.

It is the hope that this team visit from June 13-18, will place pressure on the Japanese government to reconsider its policies and the issues more seriously and responsibly.

**WOMEN'S ORDINATION  
NEARING REALITY**

The Japan Seikokai (Anglican Church), the only NCC/J member church that does not ordain women, passed a resolution at its Forty-First General Assembly to form a "Committee to Promote Women's Ordination."

The same resolution was introduced in the previous two general assembly meetings, only to be rejected each time by the Bishop's conference. General Assembly meetings are held once every two years.



The eight member committee itself is somewhat unusual in that it is composed of four women and four men. Often such committees are made up entirely of men.

In addition, a resolution was passed encouraging the multiple participation of women on all church committees.

Asked to comment on the news, Seikokai member Yamano Shigeko, Director of the Center for Christian Response to Asian Issues, expressed her happiness with the General Assembly's resolution. She added, however, that "this is only the first step, there is still a long way to go."

Speculating on why the resolution was passed at this time, after it was rejected by the Bishop's Conference on two previous occasions, Ms. Yamano said that its possible a scandal could have developed if it was rejected a third time.

The recent installation of Barbara Harris, a black women, as a Suffragan Bishop of the Anglican Church in the United States, brought world-wide media coverage and was a focal point of the global ecumenical community.

For those struggling for the equality of women in the institution of the church Harris's achievement was a celebrated success. Perhaps this well-publicized historical event bore some influence over the decision made at the Japan Seikokai's Forty-First General Assembly.

From this point on the issue of women's ordination will become a concrete issue, to be discussed in Seikokai Churches throughout Japan - it is now open for debate. But for the moment women are savoring this first victory on the road to their full and equal participation in the church and its ministry.

### STOP AID TO BURMA

Thang Htun of the All Burma Students' Democratic Front, which refuses to adhere to the government's renaming of the country "Myanmar," visited Tokyo and the

Kansai area in May appealing for an end Japan's economic assistance to h country.

The National Christian Council of Japan youth section and citizen's and human rights groups concerned with the situation in Myanmar joined forces in supporting Thang Htun's visit.

Claiming that the Myanmar government survives mainly on foreign aid, the thirty-year-old dissident said, "We need intensive political and economic pressure from other nations applied to the existing military regime to end its severe violation of human rights."

He estimated that about 70% of Japanese aid is used for military purposes and supports crimes committed by the government against the people.

Thang Htun's 5,000 member organization which has been struggling against the Myanmar regime from camps located primarily along the Thai-Myanmar border estimates that over 8,000 people have been killed in Myanmar's pro-democratic movement. Although the situation has worsened since General Saw Maung took power in a September 1988 military coup the people of Myanmar have been suffering from suppressed human rights since Ne Win took power in 1962.

It should be noted that Japan was the first industrialized power to recognize the current military regime.

As JCAN goes to press Myanmar is holding a general election, it marks the first multi-party elections in 30 years, but the dissident student organization is skeptical that positive changes will occur, claiming that the government is trying to deceive the people, and that under the current conditions free and fair elections cannot be carried out. Two of the military government's main opponents are under house arrest and a third is in prison.

The regime, known as the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC), is responsible for rampant human rights abuses and intends to strictly control all phases of the electoral process. SLORC



requires all publications, statements and declarations of political parties to be censored before public distribution; prohibits political parties from staging election campaigns; has refused to allow international monitoring groups to observe the election and has prevented foreign journalists from entering the country.

A backdrop to this situation, more than 4,000 people, including opposition party members, students, monks and housewives, whose crime has been their promotion of democracy, have been arrested. According to a report by Amnesty International "the security forces seem to have almost unrestricted authority to carry out arbitrary arrests, to detain prisoners incommunicado for months without charge or trial and to interrogate them using torture."

Aung San Suu Kyi, general secretary of the leading opposition party, the National League for Democracy, has been under house arrest since July 1989 for alleged violations of security laws. The other main leader of her National League for Democracy, Tin Oo, is serving a three-year prison term.

Former prime minister U Nu, the last democratically elected leader, was put under house arrest in December. The 84-year-old former leader was ousted in the 1962 coup led by Gen. Ne Win.

Representatives of concerned groups visited Diet members in order to step-up pressure on the Myanmar regime. A letter of protest was circulated and Diet members' signatures gathered; these were then presented to officials at the Myanmar Embassy who refused them saying that to accept them was to accept responsibility.

A small group was permitted to enter the Embassy and meet with officials who told them that since Myanmar was rich in natural resources Japanese monetary assistance was not essential.

U Nu emphasized the necessity of international cooperation essential to achievement of democracy in Myanmar. He explained that success depends on the amount and kind of pressure foreign countries apply to the military regime.

## ECUMENICAL YOUTH MOVEMENT TOWARD A NEW VISION

YAWATA Akihiko joined the Tokyo NCC/J staff in April as the new youth secretary. Before that he worked with the NCC/J youth in the Kansai region. He has traveled extensively in Asia as NCC/J's youth representative, attending numerous programs sponsored by the CCA and WCC. He brings to the NCC/J a commitment to the ecumenical movement and its struggle for justice and peace, and a vision of the Asian Ecumenical Youth Movement.

The following is the abridged text of a presentation made by Mr. Yawata which appeared in "Keadilan", an occasional publication of CCA-Youth.

He makes clear in a preface to his reflections that he does not speak on behalf of other Asians but rather from his perspective as a Japanese.

### MILITARISM AND HUMAN RIGHTS

*In 1981 when I entered university, active Japanese students were protesting the formation of the US-Japan-Korea military alliance. 'Counter-revolutionary military alliance' was our key-concept when we criticized the rising military budgets. The memory of the Kwangju Massacre in 1980 by the south Korean government supported by the U.S. military presence was shocking. "Ron-Yasu" (President Reagan and Prime Minister Nakasone) became the incarnation of imperialism. The Japanese people began to sympathize with other Asian people, recognizing another danger period in Japan's militarization.*

*In the summer of 1985, more than ten thousand Koreans in Japan (2% of the Korean population) refused fingerprinting under the Alien Registration Law. Their struggle against many kinds of social discrimination joined together with the struggles of other minority/oppressed (ethnic, caste, regional) groups to criticize Japan's Emperor-centered history. By criticizing "textbook rewriting," the voices of the Japanese*



people voice joined those of other Asian peoples.

The ecumenical movement in Japan which began around Japan's "inner third world" started to organize solidarity networks between minority/oppressed groups on an Asia-Pacific level. NCC/J-Youth has been organizing for this work.

## ECONOMIC RELATIONS BETWEEN JAPAN AND ASIA

Through the 1980's, the U.S. lost its dominance over the Asian economy, and Japan became the "money monster" in the region. The recent US-Soviet detente changed the Japanese "comprehensive security strategy" from "military-centered" to "ODA-centered" (Official Development Assistance).

Citizens' movements have just started to question strategic aid to support anti-communist governments or ODA which maintains the dependence of third-world economies on Japanese capital.

The Japanese industrial sector has been shifted to third-world nations seeking cheap labor. Laborers in basic industries organized under national unions have been laid off, and labor unions with the traditional organizational framework have lost their power.

Japanese companies exploit Asian labor free of government regulations (free trade zones are one example.) However ironically, the Japanese government is now confronted with more than one hundred thousand migrant workers from all over Asia trying to work without legal status in Japan. The situation is already out of the control of the immigration authorities, and also out of control of the Japanese labor unions and the institutional churches. The ecumenical movement is challenged by this situation.

## PROPOSALS FOR THE 1990's

Some of the emerging trends in the 1990's as discussed in the CCA-Youth Hong Kong meeting are: increasing diversity within the Asia region, emerging NIE's, migration: domestic/international, opening

and change in socialist nations, women's issues, conservatism in churches, Japanese presence in the Asia region, transformation of the rural situation, continuing militarization.

The formation of an informal working group was one of the proposals made during discussions in the Hong Kong meeting. do not mean an office or an institution when we talk of the "Asian Ecumenical Youth Movement." Therefore, what do we want to do in the name of "Asian Ecumenical Youth?"

We argued that the Asian ecumenical working groups should be composed of people who are in positions of leadership of local/national movements. Not the so-called ecumenical elites. We need ecumenical 'colleagues' to encourage a national-level movement building effort. Our basic task is to educate youth, not conservative theology but through participation in people's reality. A more systematic way for CCA Youth to support national/local level activities may be needed especially for those societies where the Christian struggle is not active enough.

The closing of the 80's was celebrated with the reconciliation of the East and West and the vision of an integrated Europe. Owing to friction over trade imbalances, discussions are occasionally held between the US and Japan on the establishment of a free trade treaty. Such cooperation led the Prime Minister of Malaysia to comment "When two elephants fight, or even when they make love, grass is trampled."

The so-called "North-South" structure appeared to be the basic contradiction prior to the East-West conflict. But this is apparent only for those who know the reality of the "south." So, it is very important for the Asian ecumenical movement to emphasize "justice" rather than "Pax Integrated Caucasiana" as was seen in the JPIC meeting for example. (Of course I'm also against Pax Japonica - as it is mentally caucasian.)

In Kamagasaki, a day laborers "bedtown," with cheap hotels which serve as their homes, laborers are organizing a group to



protect the rights of those migrant workers who labor along beside them. These workers are beginning to understand reality from which these migrant workers come, while others in Japan only focus on Japan's "national interests." Thus, the internationalization of the community is realized from the bottom of society. There are also signs of solidarity between migrant workers and the laborer movement and the Korean minority in Japan.

Japan is a pluralistic region. There is no a history of communal tensions in the region within and between societies. However, if we can build up a "new" communal identity with people from other backgrounds we can work toward cooperation for a better future for the people.

We believe the Exodus includes the process of the formation of an integrated identity among the different tribes. We must develop a communal approach rather than an individualistic one for our theologies.

The focus of internationalists like Asian Ecumenical youth will be on the struggle to overthrow the domination of Transnational Corporations (TNC's) or global capitalism over the region. Toward this end we must develop a more internationally united struggle against each individual TNC. The slogan which calls on people to boycott all goods from Japan" becomes nonsense because the TNC's are now using the faces of the NIE's. We will not be fighting against a certain nation but rather against a certain company which is transnational.

At the same time an emergent task is to propose an alternative policy to liquidate "Japanese money", which comes from the exploitation of Asian people. ODA projects now in place affirm the exploitative system. We cannot leave a few Japanese government bureaucrats free to decide how to use the ODA budget.

Exploited Asian people have a right to cross the border and say how this budget should be used. People are not persuaded by ideology. Rather, we must be able to propose an alternative policy in order that people believe our vision of a new society without exploitation.

This is my vision for our future. In the 1990's, the reality of the local community will more easily relate to the global situation. The ecumenical vision always comes from local communities because Christian activities are basically local.

The Asian Ecumenical Youth Movement is the arena for local visions to be joined into one holistic vision.

#### BOOK REVIEW JAPAN'S SUBTLE APARTHEID

JAPAN'S SUBTLE APARTHEID - The Korean Minority Now

Published by the Research/Action Institute for Koreans in Japan (RAIK)  
Price: 500 yen (US\$ 3.00)

This important new resource material is now available through the Research Action Institute for Koreans in Japan (RAIK). Being timely in its message, this publication addresses all the key elements essential in understanding the history, social barriers, personal and movement struggles, as well as the structure and methods employed in the discrimination of Korean residents in Japan.

Up-to-date information and analysis is given on the anti-fingerprinting struggle, legal changes in alien control laws and the Republic of Korea-Japan Normalization Treaty, due to expire on Jan. 16, 1991.

This treaty has determined the rights of south Korean residents in Japan for 25 years and renegotiation of the treaty by the two governments will further determine whether treaty rights will be granted to future generations, beginning with third generation Korean residents in Japan.

RAIK is an agency of the Korean Christian Church in Japan, a member of the National Christian Council in Japan, the Christian Conference of Asia, and the World Council of Churches. It functions both as a documentation center and participates in the support network in the struggle against discrimination of Korean residents



in Japan. Its research and documentation are publicized in Raik News, an English newsletter, and Raik Tsushin, a Japanese periodical.

The seven contributors, of various nationalities, are all concerned with the struggle of Koreans in Japan. Working in different capacities, they are affiliated with RAIK or participate in the support movement of the Korean community.

"Japan's Subtle Apartheid" is a very useful reference and resource for those already familiar with the issues discussed, and can serve as valuable orientation material for individuals and groups interested in learning about the issue or preparing for study tours to Japan. It is affixed with a list of contact persons, a useful bibliography and an appeal for action to its readers both in Japan and abroad, hoping to gain support in the struggle to achieve justice and legal redress for the Korean minority in Japan.

The booklet can be ordered by writing to: RAIK Room 52, 3-18 Nishi-Waseda 2-Chome, Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo 169, JAPAN. Or by calling, (03) 203-7575.

#### NUCLEARIZATION OF JAPAN PRYING OPEN PANDORA'S BOX

The Ministry of International Trade and Industry (MITI) has announced a plan for Japan's energy policy up to the year 2010. According to the report energy consumption is expected to include also the consumption of over 666 million liters of oil.

The present power output capacity of nuclear power plants in Japan is about thirty million kilowatts. Thus, it is believed to be essential to increase this capacity to over seventy two million kilowatts by the year 2010. This means another forty nuclear power plants, will be needed within the next twenty years.

The Ministry of International Trade and Industry explains that in order to

decrease oil consumption and to cut down the amount of CO<sub>2</sub> in the air the construction of nuclear power plants is essential.

Presently there are thirty-nine nuclear power plants in operation and the total output is over thirty million kilowatts. There are sixteen plants under construction and these will start production of sixteen million kilowatts the year of 1999. In order to meet future energy needs MITI is planning to increase the number of operating nuclear power plants by two every year for the next twenty years.

In the meantime the United Nations IPCC meeting was held in Moscow. Out of the meeting came the warning that by the end of twenty-first century there will be thirty million persons seeking refuge from environmental destruction due to climate changes the world over.

It was reported from the IPCC meeting that Japan, the USA, and the UK, and other economically advanced nations, are less interested in decreasing atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> levels, while Holland is seriously working for a radical decrease in CO<sub>2</sub> levels.

The Japanese government's answer to the CO<sub>2</sub> issue is a proposal to increase the number of operating nuclear power plants in Japan over next 20 years. This typical Japanese government attitude of applying technological fixes to human life-style problems, while not serving in any profound sense the purposes of decreasing atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> levels, also exposes the people of Japan and the world to even increasing levels of radiation pollution, a problem which is coming ever more powerfully to the forefront as a frontal attack on the viability of generations yet unborn through the radiological invasion and destruction of the human gene pool.

There are concerned people who are opposing these government policies on energy, yet the national interest in these issues has not come to a level where it is seen that there is a need to change life styles.

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